SUMMER 2021 : VOLUME 2 : ISSUE 4

Ṣirāṭ Link

A path for connecting with Allah, others, and one's self

Immortal

Why Karbala Had to Happen

Legacies of Karbala

Your Questions Answered

Letter from MOULANA ABIDI

Salāmun ʿAlaykum,

May Allah bless us, our families, and our communities.

Our sincerest condolences to the Imām of our time, Imām al-Mahdī (ʿaj), our great marājiʿ and scholars, the Muslim ummah, and all the believers on the upcoming commemoration of Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) shahādah.

The onset of Muḥarram marks the beginning of the Islamic new year. While all other new years start with celebration and joy, our new year begins with mourning and sorrow in accordance with the tradition of our Prophets and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). Without a doubt, Muḥarram and Ṣafar hold the same value to our faith as blood does to the human body.

Indeed, Muḥarram is the spring of flourishing our maʿrifah — deeper understanding — and spirituality. This month is full of important lessons on self-building for everyone — men and women, old and young, Muslim and non-Muslim. Therefore, we all must take advantage of these two months and benefit from them to the best of our ability, especially our children.

We can also take this as an opportunity to work on our self-improvement and self-building, and live these coming nights as if we are in the presence of our 12th Imām (ʿaj). If the Imām (ʿaj) was with us today, and he is, what would our next ten nights look like? I urge myself and all of you to keep the following five points in mind:

The majālis of the next ten nights are key elements for us to increase our educational and spiritual maʿrifah (deeper understanding) and baṣīrah (insight). As you attend majālis

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Ṣirāṭ Link

A 2nd Chance Books Publication

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا

For the love of Him, they feed the needy, the orphan, and the prisoner.

(Noble Qurʾān 76:8)

2nd Chance Books is a non-profit organization that was founded in order to assist incarcerated Muslims by providing them with educational materials, tools for rehabilitation, and a support system. By responding to their numerous questions about Islam, they gain a more thorough understanding of the religion. So far, 2nd Chance has distributed over 16,000 books to inmates across the country.

Among 2nd Chance's most recent initiatives is Ṣirāṭ Link, a quarterly magazine. The title Ṣirāṭ Link, inspired by the Arabic term Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm which means the right path, presents this magazine as a means of guidance to a greater connection to Allah, as well as offering the opportunity for connections with the broader community, and the improvement of one's self. Inshāʾ Allāh it can also serve as an opportunity for growing one's faith through education.

This magazine will be under the guidance and oversight of Moulana Nabi Raza Mir Abidi, Resident ʿĀlim of SABA Center, and several other scholars and experts.

during these nights, think of it as attending a special course in the University of Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). This course is only offered once a year, so take advantage of it.

Knowledge needs an elixir in order for it to turn our souls and actions into God-intended actions. This elixir is ṭahārah (spiritual cleanliness). Let us remember Allah through the tears we shed. As we perform ṣalāh and recite the Noble Qurʾān, let us remember the ṣalāh Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) performed on the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ and the Noble Qurʾān he recited from atop the spear. And let us purify our souls to reach the status of those who are sincere.

These nights should be used to strengthen our emotional connection to the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) and solidify our love for them. Let us become true muḥibbīn — lovers of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa).

Let us direct our love and status of muḥibbīn to help us become muṭiʿīn — those who are obedient toward Allah and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). Let this love be the ignition of aʿmāl aṣ-ṣāliḥ — pure actions.

With the above four points, let us then become the true ambassadors of Islam and demonstrate this in the best possible way: through our akhlāq. As Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) has narrated:

يا معشرالشيعة إنكم قد نُسبتم إلينا، كونوا لنا زيناً، ولا تكونوا علينا شينا

O Shīʿah! You are connected to us, so be ornaments for us, and do not be a disgrace for us.

Brothers and sisters, to become true ambassadors of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) and Islam, we need to take these ten days as an opportunity for change. On these nights, let us have fruitful discussions where we reflect upon and discuss what we have learned from the lectures and majālis. Let's strengthen our relationship with our Creator and Nurturer during these ten nights. Let us answer our Creator when He calls us and establish our ṣalāh on time, the same ṣalāh that was so near and dear to our beloved Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa).

Pray for the Muslim ummah, and bring awareness to your children so they can prepare for the ẓuhūr of Imām al-Mahdī (ʿaj). Talk to them about everything that is happening in the world, especially to our Muslim brothers and sisters and the children who are being oppressed all around the world in Burma, Yemen, Syria, Kashmir, Palestine, Bahrain, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and everywhere else.

We pray that Allah gives us the tawfīq to actualize our duties and responsibilities.

With Duʿās,

Sayyid Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)

Resident ʿĀlim of SABA Islamic Center

SIGNIFICANT DAYS OF SHAHR MUḤARRAM

2nd	Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) and caravan arrive in Karbala	*August 11th, 2021
9th	Eve of ʿĀshūrāʾ Tāsūʿah	*August 18th, 2021
10th	Day of ʿĀshūrāʾ: death anniversary of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa), male family members, and companions	*August 19th, 2021
25th	Death anniversary of Imām ʿAlī as-Sajjād (ʿa)	*September 3rd, 2021

SIGNIFICANT DAYS OF SHAHR ṢAFAR

7th	Birth anniversary of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʿa)	*September 14th, 2021
20th	Arbaʿīn: 40th day after the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)	*September 27th, 2021
28th	Death anniversary of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ)	*October 5th, 2021
28th	Death anniversary of Imām Ḥasan (ʿa)	*October 5th, 2021
30th	Death anniversary of Imām ʿAlī ar-Riḍā (ʿa)	*October 7th, 2021

SIGNIFICANT DAYS OF SHAHR RABĪʿ AL-AWWAL

8th	Death Anniversary of Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (ʿa)	*October 15th, 2021
9th	Beginning of Imāmate of Imām al-Mahdī (ʿaj)	*October 16th, 2021
17th	Birth Anniversary of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ)	*October 24th, 2021
17th	Birth Anniversary of Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa)	*October 24th, 2021

*Please note the above Gregorian dates are only estimates. The dates are subject to change based on moon sighting, upon which the Islamic calendar is based.

WHY KARBALA HAD TO HAPPEN

By Sayyid Musavi

Editor's note: *The following are excerpts from "The Lives of the Twelve: A Look at the Social and Political Lives of the Twelve Infallible Imāms (ʿa)" which was written by Shaykh Mahdī Pīshvāʾī and translated by Sayyid Ali Musawi. This is the first book in a three-part book series covering the lives of Imām ʿAlī (ʿa), Imām Ḥasan (ʿa), and Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa).*

The slogan of 'commanding the good and forbidding evil' was Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) most fundamental message from the very first day of his departure from Medina. Therefore, it is incorrect to say that since Yazīd was pressuring him for his pledge of allegiance, then (and only then) Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) found it necessary to rise up against him. Even if Yazīd had not forced him into such a position, and even if the people of Kūfa had not invited him, still it would have been necessary for Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) to rise up against the tyrant Yazīd.

The logic of Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) movement was one of protest and rebellion against the corrupt and un-Islamic government of Yazīd. This was a government which had covered the Islamic world in social, political, and economic corruption; it was therefore the responsibility of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) to rise up against Yazīd.

Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) launched his movement under the overall plan of reforming many key aspects of the Islamic society. Among them was a proliferation of religious innovations, the effacement of the prophetic way of life, and an increase in corruption and sin.

During this time, the government and the wealth of the Muslim nation had fallen into the hands of the Umayyid dynasty. The Umayyids had been one of the strongest opponents of Islam and the Prophet (ṣ) from the earliest days. They had continued fighting against the Muslims until the conquest of Mecca, when it became impossible to continue their fight openly. They were one of the last families to accept Islam, and even then, they did so only due to the fact that no other options were open to them. In doing so, they became known as hypocrites and slowly began a struggle to gain dominance and power in the newly structured society and government. Over time, they took over the more important roles in the government until the martyrdom of Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) when Muʿāwiyah took over the caliphate of the Muslim nation.

When this took place, the clan hid their evil intentions against the Muslims and tried to conceal the fact that they were replacing the Muslim government with one based on concepts from the 'Age of Ignorance', before the coming of Islam. However, as time passed, they couldn't conceal their true nature and it ended up manifesting itself in a significant way. At times, their words spoken in private gatherings would be leaked where people would begin to realize who and what they were. In this way, Karbala was inevitable and was necessary for the Muslim ummah to return to its purified foundations established by the Prophet (ṣ). With this objective in mind, Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) movement quickly gained momentum and came to fruition in Karbala.

Before leaving the holy city of Medina, Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) wrote his will and delivered it to his brother Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyiyah. In it, he explained his reasons for rising as the reformation of the Muslim community, 'commanding the good and forbidding the evil', and reviving the way of life of his grandfather, the Prophet (ṣ), as well as his father, Imām ʿAlī (ʿa). In his will, Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) first explained his beliefs in regards to the oneness of God, prophethood, and resurrection, and then he wrote the following: "I am not leaving Medina from selfishness or caprice. Nor am I leaving it to create corruption and oppression. My goal in this movement is to reform the corruption which has taken place in this nation. I aim to command the good and forbid the evil, and to advance the way of life of my grandfather, the Prophet (ṣ), and my father, ʿAlī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (ʿa). Whoever follows me in this path… should know that I am about to depart, until the day that God judges between me and these people, for He is the best of judges…."

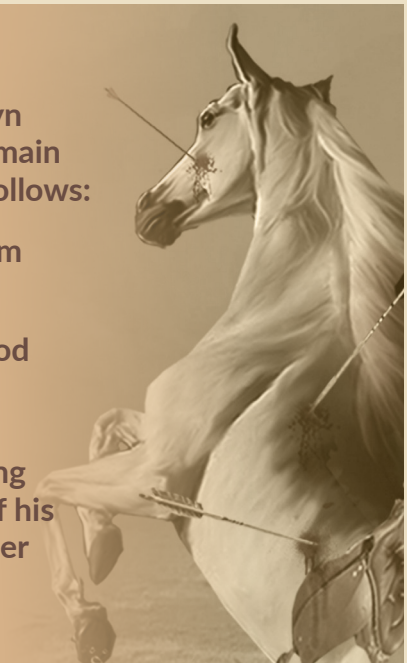
In this will, Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) announces his four main motives. These are as follows:

1- Reforming the Muslim nation

2- Commanding the good

3- Forbidding the evil

4- Following and reviving the religious creed of his grandfather and father



It is interesting to note that most revolutions and movements are composed of two main components: there is 'blood' and then there is the 'message'. What is meant by blood is an armed uprising for the sake of the movement at hand. What is meant by the message is the delivery and conveyance of the revolutionary message and goals of the movement to the masses.

In the success of a revolution or a movement, the second point isn't less important than the first. If the goals of the movement are not propagated and explained to the masses, then the movement will be bereft of any backing or support. Furthermore, whatever the movement's goals happen to be, the opposition (which usually holds the power and the reins of the mass media) will distort and twist the truth and convey an alternative image and message to the public.

Both of these aspects were present in Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) movement. The first component, which was that of armed uprising and revolution, was present up to the point of ʿĀshūrāʾ when the fighters were killed. After the fighters were killed, the second part was initiated by some of the survivors such as Imām Zayn ul-ʿĀbidīn (ʿa) and Lady Zaynab (ʿa). Through their powerful and timely sermons, they delivered the message of the movement to the masses. When the masses began to hear the truth of what had happened, the government's reputation and their claims of legitimacy were dealt a deadly blow.

For many years, the Umayyad government had been busy with a widespread and extensive campaign of slander and lies against the family of the Prophet (ṣ). This propaganda campaign had been particularly effective in Syria due to various political and social reasons. If the survivors of Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) movement had not engaged in awakening the masses and in spreading the true message of the movement, it is without a doubt that the truth would have been altered in the pages of history and shown in a greatly distorted form, not just to the people of that era but to the people who were to come later, as well.

The Moon of Banī Hāshim

By Shaykh Mateen Charbonneau

When thinking of the standard bearer of Karbala Abu Faḍl ʿAbbās (ʿa), one thinks of heroism, bravery, dedication, altruism and many more beautiful attributes. He was the younger brother of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) and was known amongst people as the Moon of Banī Hāshim, the tribe of the Prophet (ṣ). His mother came from a noble family of warriors. According to historical narration, Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) asked his brother ʿAqīl, who was an expert on genealogy, *"Find me a woman born to the bravest of the Arabs to marry, so that she gives birth to a courageous and brave child to support Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) in the land of Karbala."*[1]

ʿAqīl said to him, *"Marry Umm al-Banīn al-Kilābiyyah, as there is no one among the Arabs braver than her fathers."*[2]

ʿAbbās (ʿa) was dedicated to the service of his brother. He knew the role his brother had as an Imām appointed by Allah. ʿAbbās (ʿa) knew that Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) is the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ), the son of Fāṭimah (ʿa), that he is the proof of Allah on him and the worlds, the grandson of the Messenger (ṣ), and the Master of the Youth of Paradise. For this reason, he only spoke to him with complete respect, by calling him: *"O' son of the Messenger of Allah" or "O' Master."*[3] He would race to be the one who helped and supported his Imām. If Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) expressed his thirst, ʿAbbās (ʿa) would hurry to offer him a cup of water. He wanted to meet his Imām's every need, because he knew serving Allah's representative was the best deed he could do. The Imām is the one Allah told us that his obedience is binding:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ

"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you."[4]

True bravery is not only bravery in battle against the enemies, rather it is all characteristics of humanity, such as courtesy, loyalty, sacrifice and sympathy. All of which were characteristics that ʿAbbās (ʿa) possessed. Simply, look at what he fought and was martyred for. ʿAbbās (ʿa) was martyred while bringing water for the thirsty. He prioritized the water over his own life. So, his primary objective was not to defend himself from the enemy, but rather to protect the water-skin at all costs in order to deliver it to the thirsty of the Household of the Messenger (ṣ).[5]

When the children of the household of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) began crying of thirst and were on the brink of perishing due to the exhausting heat, something had to be done. The enemy was blocking the water supply from the camp of the household of the Prophet (ṣ).Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) entrusted his noble brother ʿAbbās (ʿa) with the task of getting water for the children. It is told that when he successfully reached the bank of the river Euphrates, he knelt down to quench his thirst as he had not tasted any water for three days. Then as the water was in his hands, he thought of his beloved master Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) and his thirsty children. How could he drink before they quenched their thirst? How could he satisfy and put his needs before those of his master Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)? With this thought, he cast the water from his hands back into the river. He then filled the container with water and was coming back to return it to the children when he was struck on the arm and his right hand was cut off, he said very clearly:

1 Al-Abbas by Abdul-Razzaq al-Muqram [from Umdat al-Taleb w Sir al-Silsilah by Abul-Nasr / / pg194 [from al-Kibrit al-Ahmar / v3 / pg144] and [Asrar al-Shahadah / pg387]

2 ibid. / pg357]

3 Al-Abbas Ibn Ali: Supporter of al-Hussain by Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammed Taqi al-Modarresi

وَاللهِ اِن قَطَعتُم يَميني

By Allah, if you cut my right (hand),

إِنّي أَحامي أَبَدًا عَن ديني

I will continue to defend my religion,

وَعَن إِمامِ صادِقِ اليَقين

and the Imām with complete certainty:

نَجلِ النَّبِي الطّاهِرِ الأَمين

Son of the virtuous, trusted Prophet (ṣ).

After they cut his hand, he did not pay attention, rather he poetically said:

يا نَفسُ لا تَخشي مِنَ الكُفّار

Oh, my soul do not fear the non-believers,

وَأبشِري بِرَحمَةِ الجَبّار

Rather, rejoice in the Almighty's mercy

مَعَ النَّبِي السَيِّدِ المُختار

Alongside the chosen master, the Prophet (ṣ)

قَد قَطَعوا بِبَغيِهِم يَساري

They have cut with their injustice my left (hand),

فَأَصلِهِم يا رَبِّ حُرَّ النّار

Thus, punish them, O' Lord, with the heat of fire.

Art by AlamdarDesign on deviantart

He continued carrying the water until another blow was given and his left hand was cut off. He was so determined that he continued to carry the container of water by holding the strap with his teeth! He was heading toward his master Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) when an arrow was shot that pierced his eye causing him to fall from his horse bursting the water bag. When we fall our first reaction is to put out our hands to brace our fall, but how could ʿAbbās ('a) brace his fall when he had no hands?! This is the tragedy of one of the greatest warriors in history!

The story of ʿAbbās (ʿa) is heart wrenching and requires a deep look into this tragic event to extract some lessons from it. We see through this tragedy dedication to the Imām of the time, loyalty to the Imām even when times are tough, placing the needs of others above ourselves, bravery and steadfastness in the face of calamities, and more. When we look at the shrine of ʿAbbās (ʿa) or hear his blessed name, it should remind us that he gave everything for the sake of Allah, his religion and his Imām. He gave his two hands, his eye, and his life for Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa). We must ask ourselves, what are we doing with our lives? What have we done for the sake of Allah, our religion and our Imām (ʿaj)? We must make the best of our time and strive to follow in the footsteps of ʿAbbās (ʿa) the loyal supporter of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa). He always placed the needs of his master Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) over his own self. This is something we must take a lesson from. We must have submission and devotion to our Imām (ʿaj).

4 Noble Qurʾān 4:59
5 Al-Abbas Ibn Ali: Supporter of al-Hussain by Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammed Taqi al-Modarresi

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ ٱللّٰهِ

Assalāmu ʿalayka yā Abā ʿAbdillāh

Peace be upon you, O Abā ʿAbdillāh

اَلسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بْنَ رَسُولِ ٱللّٰهِ

Assalāmu ʿalayka yab-na Rasūlillāh

Peace be upon you, O son of Allah's Messenger (ṣ)

اَللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي عِنْدَكَ وَجِيهاً

Allāhummaj-ʿalnī ʿindaka wajīhan

O Allah, (please) make me illustrious in Your sight

بِالْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ

bilḥusayni ʿalayhis-salāmu fid-dunyā wal-ākhirah

In the name of al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, in this world and in the hereafter.

LEGACIES O

By Sayyid Muzzamil Zaidi

The unparalleled personality in the history of mankind, who became the epitome of the resistance against the oppressor, was the iconic figure of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa), the grandson of the Seal of Prophets (ṣ). He became the global symbol of justice and continues to rock the world of the oppressors fourteen centuries after his martyrdom. This is the direct impact of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa).

Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) movement is something that is still illuminating and arousing the sense of humanity in the souls of sleepy and distracted peoples. In fact, all the dimensions of Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) movement have yet to be uncovered and many lessons have yet to be revealed. There are two ways to benefit from commemorating Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) struggle. One is through looking at it purely from a historical perspective and the other is to view it as a living phenomenon that continues to guide human beings.

What really transpired on the 10th of Muḥarram that made the remembrance of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) and his companions immortal?

I am sure many have not come across an event that has been labeled as a tragedy, yet is simultaneously remembered as the ultimate source of victory and happiness.

Among the many different ways of viewing the Battle of Karbala, especially paramount is how to make pious choices at the most critical times of our lives. Examining the circumstances that the companions of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) faced, it becomes clear that despite all the odds, they still willingly sacrificed their lives. They had the opportunity of leaving their Imām (divinely appointed leader) and still be on the good side of history, as Imām (ʿa) had guaranteed them the highest ranks of heaven, but they chose to stay by his side.

Historians have always wondered what transpired in the first 50 years that led the nation that Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) had liberated from ignorance to become a fierce enemy of his grandson Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa).

The oppressive ruler, Yazīd bin Muʿāwiyah, had illegitimately usurped power. Muslims were not given the choice to endorse Yazīd, but rather their oath of loyalty to him was demanded. Muʿāwiyah was particularly after the oath of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) as he knew that an oath from the grandson of the Prophet (ṣ) would solidify his rule and unjust government. However, the noble blood flowing in the veins of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) would never allow him to pay allegiance to an oppressor, even at the cost of sacrificing everything.

Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa), the grandson of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) and the third Imām for mankind, was raised under the guidance of Imām ʿAlī (ʿa), his father and rightful successor of the Prophet (ṣ), his mother, Sayyidah Fāṭimah az-Zahrāʾ (ʿa), and Imām Ḥasan (ʿa), his older brother. His right to rule was usurped by Yazīd ruling from Damascus, who sent an ultimatum to the Imām (ʿa) in Medina, that either the Imām (ʿa) pays allegiance to his illegitimate rule or be ready to lose his head. Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) response was clear as he said, "The likes of Ḥusayn (ʿa) will never pay allegiance to the likes of Yazīd." This statement is one of the reasons that

F KARBALA

the movement of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) continues to inspire freedom-seeking people. Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) meant that those who follow his traits will never give in to those who have the traits of Yazīd, an oppressor, even if the oppressor has a larger army, government, and power. A person with Ḥusayni traits will never give in to the oppressor, no matter how great the odds he faces.

History continues to narrate that Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) refused to pay allegiance to Yazīd and embarked on a journey to confront him in the battle that will forever serve as the source of hope and guidance for all people. Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) was promised support by the people of Kūfa in the form of 18,000 letters, a city in Iraq under Yazīd's rule. To guage the situation on the ground, Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) sent a messenger and his loyal cousin, Muslim ibn ʿAqīl, to Kūfa to see if the letters were sincere. Upon his arrival, Muslim ibn ʿAqīl promptly sent a letter to Imām (ʿa) confirming the Kūfans' commitment. However, the tides began to turn quickly before the eyes of Muslim. When push came to shove and the critical time for decisions to be made and sides to be chosen, thousands of Kūfans were swayed, through coercion, bribery, and threats, to abandon the truth. This abandonment came with the betrayal and assassination of the messenger of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa). He was captured in Kūfa and his martyrdom marked the beginning of the atrocities that would be inflicted upon Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) and his most loyal companions. Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) reached the land of Karbala outside of Kūfa by about 40 miles, along with his family and companions, around 100 in number, while the army that Yazīd sent to confront them was over 30,000. The small army of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) quite literally faced their deaths, it was at this point that whatever decisions they made, to flee or to serve Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa), would be the deciding factor in whether or not their memories would become immortal. It was also clear that the choice they were going to make would not only affect their worldly life, but would either be the source of their salvation or damnation in the afterlife. Those who fought alongside Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) knew that fighting against the oppressor would guarantee them eternal divine favors. However, while this may have been the goal of many, the companions of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) sought a higher purpose. The night before the battle of Karbala, Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) gathered all of his companions and gave them a choice. Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) thanked his companions for the unwavering support and made them aware of what would await them the next day. He made it very clear that they would forfeit their lives if they remained with him, but he guaranteed that their reward would be paradise. Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) made his companions a promise that if they were to leave him that night, they would be able to save their lives and still enjoy the bounties of the hereafter. For many of us, it seems that this would have been the perfect ending, for we would have had our worldly lives and the afterlife.

However, when your soul is truly purified and free of worldly desires, like the companions of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa), even paradise pales in comparison with the thought of sacrificing your soul for the sake of Allah and His Divine guide.

continued on page 14

Art by Mahdi 313 Art

WHO IS HUSSAIN?

Hussain gave everything he had, including his life, for the greater good and for the benefit of those around him, and his epic legacy continues to inspire millions across the world on a daily basis...

WHOISHUSSAIN.ORG

Who is Hussain is a global grassroots organization seeking to build compassionate communities. We aim to achieve this by carrying out meaningful local initiatives seeking to work for the common good and producing thought-provoking written and video content for our global audience. The organization and our volunteers are all inspired by the timeless legacy of Hussain ibn Ali (ʿa), a beacon of goodness, and the values he stood for; those of compassion, justice and dignity.

We have our headquarters in London and **over 60 teams** worldwide. Our teams carry out hundreds of charitable initiatives ranging from organizing blood drives to helping the homeless throughout the year. To date, collectively, our teams have provided meals to **more than half a million people**, saved **22,400 lives** through numerous blood drives and **close to 400,000 acts** of kindness have been undertaken - all in the name of Hussain. We have **over 23 teams** across North and South America engaging in a wide variety of events which support their local communities

Karbala

For the sake of Allah, Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) strived
He killed falsehood and helped the truth survive

His fight against the corruption of Islam was imperative
He sacrificed his all, and won the eternal narrative

Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) was brutally killed but he did not die
In the hearts of thousands he remains forever alive

His story strikes a chord and we can't help crying
His love in our hearts saves our souls from dying

Helping to heal us and purify our intention
To gain obedience to Allah and rise in ascension

Every time we let our desires have free reign
Imām Ḥusayn's (ʿa) sacrifice becomes a death in vain

We must ask ourselves a question and answer it with care
Which camp are we really in, during this Karbala affair?

Are we in the camp of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)
With those whose love for him fill their veins?

His truly noble and courageous friends
Their souls from selfish desires, fully cleansed

Obedient to Allah and the Imām of their time
They have conquered their selves, now fully sublime

Those that light up the darkness like stars on the earth
Shining bright for those in heaven looking down in mirth

They are the true Shīʿah of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)
The likes of them not seen on earth again

Or are we on the side of Yazīd?
The slaves of selfishness and greed

Those who sold a life that's lasting for the fleeting
Love of *dunyā* [1] distracting them from Allah's meeting

They are happy to kill Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)
Playing and laughing with no shame

Living a heedless life with no goal
Unwittingly killing their own soul

Or are we of those who ran away on their own
And left Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) behind to die alone

Within

By Zaineb Latif

Too cowardly to face the enemies they praised
Too weak of heart to fight the desires they raised

And so they live their lives avoiding responsibility
Immersed in various types of games and futility

Trying to avoid the guilt eating them away
As he dies within their hearts every day

Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) is the *fiṭrah*[2] keeping our hearts alive
Our conscience without Ḥusayn (ʿa) cannot survive

We must see where we really stand and be true
Make a decision in the war that rages inside of you

An Imām cannot serve and gain victory on his own
He needs loyal supporters who follow him alone

He could not find 313 loyal followers to succeed
The Imām of our time (ʿaj) can't either, do we not heed?

We call يا ليتَنا كنّا مَعكم "we wish we were with you"
When our Imām (ʿaj) appears, will those words be true?

We must preserve Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) within our souls
By living like him and his followers as our main goal

To be Zaynab (ʿa) in the words we say
And as-Sajjād (ʿa) in the way we pray

Be ʿAbbās (ʿa) with our sisters and our brothers
And ʿAlī al-Akbar (ʿa) with our fathers and our mothers

Be Qāsim in his self respect
and Ḥurr in his introspect

Let's join the camp of Ḥusayn (ʿa) this Muharram, be brave
And tell our selve's desires, "we're no longer your slave!"

The plains of Karbala represent the recesses of our heart
And we must take up arms so that the struggle can start

Let's improve every year with Ḥusayn's (ʿa) love
So that he would smile on us from heaven above

The one who fights his inner self is the most courageous one
To win the smaller struggle we first need to win the greater one

Our chance to serve with our Imām (ʿaj) is coming near
Let's get ready and become a believer sincere

1 This world
2 The innate nature of God-consciousness

continued from page 9

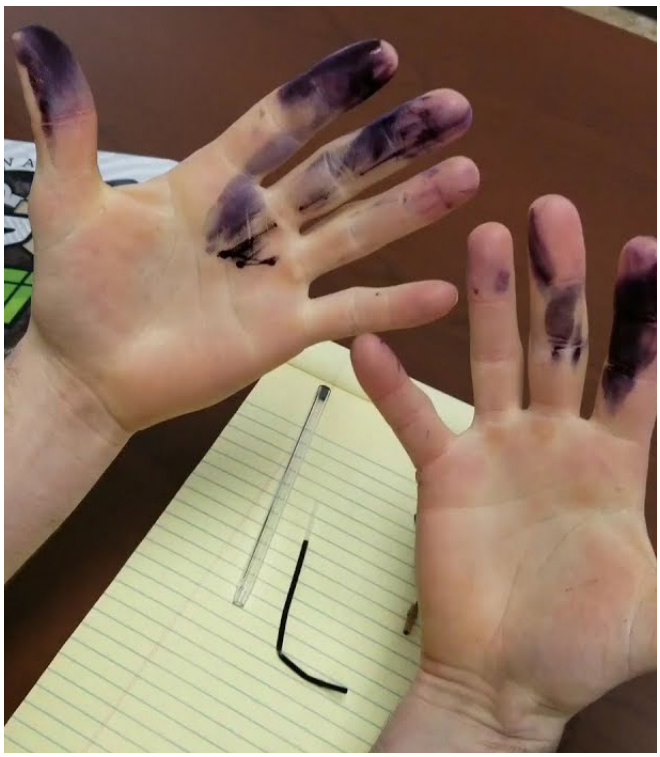
Therefore, when the Imām (ʿa) gave his companions the choice of leaving him behind, they renewed their loyalty to him by declaring that even if they were to be killed 1000 times and brought back to life, they would still be on the side of their Imām (ʿa). Their love for the Imām (ʿa) was the result of their love for Allah; they could no longer settle for anything other than to sacrifice their existence in the way of Allah. Their love for Allah could not have let them live for a moment if Allah's representative, their Imām (ʿa), was killed by the oppressors.

The choices that made the remembrance of the companions of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) immortal are the same ones we face on a daily basis. Confronting us in every passing moment is the challenge of choosing between right and wrong. This worldly life is not worthy enough for us to become oblivious about eternal salvation or damnation. Every action of our day to day life is a test from Allah and that is because we were created to be tested. When we pass those tests, we grow. Those who understand the concept of the test realize that this is the tool to be dissolved in the love of the Beloved, that is Allah. When you love someone, you want to do things which are liked by your beloved. How can we claim that we love our Creator, while we end up doing things which please our desires, rather than being content with His will? May Allah help us fall in love with Him and help us prove our love for Him by making the right decisions at the critical moments in our lives.

"The likes of Ḥusayn (ʿa) will never pay allegiance to the likes of Yazīd."

Fiqh F

Fiqh Facts is a space where short but frequently asked jurisprudential rulings are shared. They will typically be in rule form, but may occasionally appear as a question and answer as seen below. If you have any questions about a particular jurisprudential issue, please do not hesitate to write at the address provided on page 16.



Question: Is the ink that had dried [on our hands, for example] a barrier to perform wuḍūʾ or ghusl?

Answer: In order for wuḍūʾ and ghusl to be performed correctly, water has to reach the skin that is being washed or wiped. If the ink does not form a layer that would prevent water from reaching the skin, it would not be considered a barrier for the wuḍūʾ or ghusl. However, if one has doubt whether the ink forms such a layer or not, it must be removed.

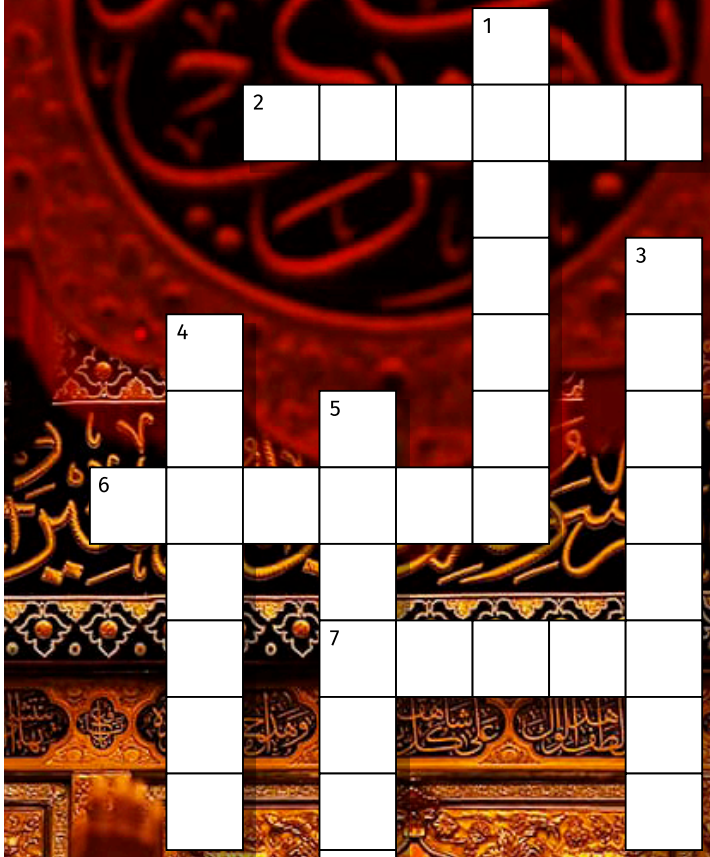
acts

Question: What is the Islamic law about tattoos? Do they affect the wuḍūʾ and ghusl?

Answer: Tattoos are permissible as long as they do not depict an indecent image; do not entail sacred names or words such as Allah and His names, verses of the Qurʾān, and the names of the Prophet (ṣ) and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa); do not cause the person who is wearing them to be humiliated by others; and do not cause a man to resemble a woman[1]. Some of the *Marājiʿ* (a jurist of the highest level) have discouraged getting tattoos[2], perhaps on the basis of the potentially negative societal ramifications of doing so. In any case, tattoos do not affect wuḍūʾor ghusl, unless they are a stick-on type of temporary tattoo that forms a barrier which prevents water from reaching the skin. If the tattoo would be considered a *zīnah* (adornment), a female would need to cover it from the view of a *non-Maḥram* [someone she is not related to by marriage or immediate familial ties].

1 https://www.islamquest.net/fa/archive/question/fa9827
2 https://makarem.ir/main.aspx?typeinfo=21&lid=0&catid=45143&mid=256976

Test Your Knowledge



ACROSS:

2. The third leader appointed by Allah
6. The tenth day
7. The loyal and brave brother

DOWN:

1. The land he was killed in
3. His relation to the Noble Prophet (ṣ)
4. The reason he took a stand
5. The month of mourning

Answers on page 17

Have a Question? Ask an Islamic Scholar!

Please write to us with your questions or comments below. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Transliteration Guide

Arabic terms in this booklet have been transliterated according to the following guidelines:

ء	a, i, or u (initial form)	ظ	ẓ
ء	ʾ (medial or final form)	ع	ʿ
ا	a	غ	gh
ب	b	ف	f
ت	t	ق	q
ث	th	ك	k
ج	j	ل	l
ح	ḥ	م	m
خ	j	ن	n
د	d	ه	h
ذ	dh	و	w
ر	r	ي	y
ز	z	ة	h (without iḍāfah)
س	s	ة	t (with iḍāfah)
ش	sh		
ص	ṣ	ـَـ	a
ض	ḍ	ـِـ	i
ط	ṭ	ـُـ	u

Arabic Glossary

(ṣ): Peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muḥammad and his family

(swt): All Glory belongs to God, the Glorified and Exalted

(ʿa): Peace and blessings be upon him/her

(ʿaj): May God hasten his reappearance

Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa): Divinely appointed family members of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ)

Next Issue

A Life of Solitude

The Birth of Humanity

The Birth of Imām ʿAlī ar-Riḍā (ʿa)

Crossword Answers:
ACROSS: *2-Ḥusayn, 6-Ashura, 7-Abbas.*
DOWN: *1-Karbala, 3-Grandson, 4-Justice, 5-Muharram.*

Indeed,
Allah is with
the Patient.
Noble Qurʾān, 2:153
2ND
CHANCE